



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL  
GOVERNOR

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## **Governor Rell Expands Disaster Aid Request to Include Individual Assistance, Additional Counties**

*Survey Finds 1,315 Homes Damaged, Losses of \$5.3 Million;  
Another 116 Business Damaged, Losses of \$5.4 Million*

Governor M. Jodi Rell today announced that she is expanding her request to President Obama for a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration to broaden the area hardest-hit by severe storms in March and to provide financial assistance to individual homeowners and businesses in five counties: Fairfield, Middlesex, New Haven, New London and Windham.

“This is critical news for homeowners and employers,” Governor Rell said. “It offers them a financial lifeline to recover from storm damage. If this request is approved – and I have every reason to believe it will be – then the federal government will step in to help hard-pressed Connecticut residents and business owners recover from these devastating storms. I will be working closely with officials in Washington to move the process along as quickly as possible.

“Little in life can be as dispiriting as standing over the waterlogged wreckage of a basement, home or business, looking at a tree coming through the roof of a home or examining a car crushed by a fallen tree, and wondering how you will start over again,” the Governor said. “This assistance, along with the state loan programs and other aid we are making available, should help lift some of that burden.”

Two types of federal financial help are available after a disaster: “Public Assistance” (PA), which is aid to state and local governments for damages and costs such as police and firefighter overtime incurred while dealing with a disaster, and “Individual Assistance” (IA), which is aid to individual homeowners to help cover uninsured losses.

Governor Rell on Friday asked the President to declare a major disaster in two counties – Fairfield and New London – and begin the process of providing PA in those two counties. An initial survey found public sector losses in those two counties of at least \$11 million.

Over the weekend, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and state Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) officials continued to tally losses from severe storms on March 12-14 and March 29-30, providing the Governor with additional information she used to update her request today.

Governor Rell today asked President Obama to declare the residents of Fairfield, Middlesex, New Haven, New London and Windham counties eligible for IA, and to make U.S. Small Business Administration loans available to employers in those counties.

Surveys identified a total of 1,315 homes in the five counties with damages totaling \$5,262,100 in estimated housing assistance needs and Other Needs Assistance. The Small Business Administration determined that 116 businesses were affected and estimated the damages at \$5,359,250.

The Governor also asked the President to add Middlesex, New Haven and Windham counties to the major disaster declaration and to add Middlesex County to the list of counties eligible for PA.

FEMA, DEMHS and the National Weather Service are treating the storms as a single, related weather event. The heavy rains of March 12-14 left the ground so saturated and the state's rivers so high that the subsequent rains caused severe flooding.

Governor Rell earlier announced an unprecedented state loan program to help with urgent structural repairs and the replacement of critical appliances such as furnaces and water heaters. Information on the program can be found on the Connecticut Housing Investment Fund (CHIF) Web site at [www.chif.org](http://www.chif.org).

The loans, offered at an interest rate of 2 percent, will cover the repair of damage to basements, foundations, roofs and insulation and the purchase of critical appliances such as furnaces and hot water heaters that were damaged from basement flooding.

The loans include maximum limits of:

- \$20,000 for structural repair
- \$750 for hot water heaters
- \$7,000 for furnaces